

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (e) A Conference of the Chief Ministers of States/UTs was held on 24 May, 1997 under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister to discuss an Action Plan for Effective and Responsive Government. The Action Plan dealt with three themes, namely, Accountable and Citizen-friendly Government, Transparency and Right to Information, and Improving the Performance and Integrity of the Public Services. The issues that were discussed under these themes and which are being followed up at Central and State levels are:

- (i) Citizens Charter and accountable administration;
- (ii) Effective and speedy public grievance redressal system;
- (iii) Empowering elected local bodies and decentralised delivery of services;
- (iv) Review of laws, regulations and procedures;
- (v) Transparency and Right to Information;
- (vi) Access of the public to information from public offices and facilitation counters;
- (vii) Code of Ethics for public services;
- (viii) Tackling corruption and cleansing the administration;
- (ix) Stability of tenure and a scheme for Civil Services Boards.

The Chief Ministers and Central Ministers attending the Conference strongly endorsed the need for ensuring responsive, accountable, transparent and people-friendly administration at all levels. In the Resolution adopted at the Conference, the States welcomed the initiatives taken by the Prime Minister towards more effective and responsive administration and stated that these initiatives were important and timely. It was agreed that each State would work for the implementation of the Action Plan, making appropriate allowance for variation in local circumstances.

The Government has set up a Committee under the Cabinet Secretary including some Chief Secretaries representing different regions of the country as well as some senior officials of the Government of India in order to elaborate different elements of the Action Plan and work out various decisions required at Central and State levels.

[Translation]

Release of Washerries in Damodar River

953. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether residuals from the washeries of Coal India Limited and its auxiliary companies like Dugdha, Kargali, Swang and Kathara washeries are being released into Damodar river passing through the Coal belt of Bihar;
- (b) whether residuals and waste of Bokaro thermal power station and C.T.P.S. are also being released into the Damodar river; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check this practice?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Under normal circumstances, no discharge from coal washeries located in the Damodar basin goes into the river Damodar as all coal washeries including those of the Coal India Limited and its auxiliary companies like Dugdha, Kargali, Swang and Kathara have installed waste water recycling systems. However, during monsoon months, some coal fines and other rejects from these washeries are swept away along with surface run-off into the river. Ash slurry from the Bokaro Thermal Power Station is being released into the river Damodar without proper treatment. This matter is being heard and monitored by the Supreme Court under the public interest litigation of M.C. Mehta, V/s. Union of India & others. The Central Pollution Control Board has issued directions to the Chandrapura Thermal Power Station (CTPS) on 14.05.1997 for taking immediate steps to ensure that effluents from the power station are discharged into the river after proper treatment only.

[English]

Setting up of Petro-Chemical Complexes

954. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government have cleared certain projects for setting up Petro-Chemical complexes in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, Statewise (particularly in Punjab); and
- (c) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

- (b) Details are contained in the enclosed *Statement*.
- (c) Information is being collected.